



Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup

For The Week Ending April 6, 2003

Poor week for Field Work: There were 2 days suitable for field work. Soil moisture was rated 55 percent adequate and 45 percent surplus. Principle farm activities included caring for livestock; preparing equipment for upcoming season; repairing fences; obtaining seeds; hauling manure; spreading fertilizer; spraying fruit; and attending co-op and farm meetings.

Crops: The cold, wet weather continued to prevent farmers from doing much cultivating and planting. Only 8 percent of spring plowing was complete, 20 percent lower than 2002 and 14 percent lower than the five-year average. Ten percent of the oat acreage was planted, 6 percent behind 2002 and 4 percent behind the five-year average. Winter wheat condition improved slightly from last week, with 8 percent rated as poor, 30 percent fair, 48 percent good and 14 percent excellent. Alfalfa condition improved from last week as well, with 1 percent rated as very poor stand, 3 percent poor, 40 percent fair, 42 percent good and 14 percent excellent. Four percent of timothy clover stand was rated very poor stand, 5 percent was poor, 34 percent was fair, 52 percent was good and 5 percent was excellent, not varying much from last week's values. Both alfalfa and timothy clover condition are slightly better than observed at this time in 2002.

Livestock: Because of snow and cool temperatures, farmers were still supplementing livestock with grain and hay. Some farmers did report that pasture land was beginning to grow, but not enough for extensive pasturing. Thirteen percent of pasture land was rated very poor, 7 percent poor, 28 percent fair, 47 percent good and 5 percent excellent. Overall the condition this week was slightly better than last week and was much better than the condition observed last year.

U.S. As Of March 30, 2003: Highlights - Most areas enjoyed warm weather early in the week. By week's end, a cold front had covered much of the eastern part of the country. Snow in the Northeast halted outdoor activities. Dry weather prevailed over most of the Great Plains, western Corn Belt, and Great Lakes region, but cold weather limited small grain seeding. Temperatures were near normal to slightly above normal in the Southeast, until the cold front moved through at week's end. Planting preparations advanced despite recent rains. Showers and above-normal temperatures stimulated development of winter grains and forages along the eastern Gulf Coast, as well as adjacent areas of the interior Southeast and Atlantic Coastal Plains. Winter Wheat: The Nation's winter wheat condition was rated as 3 percent very poor, 11 percent poor, 35 percent fair, 43 percent good, and 8 percent excellent. Wheat freeze damage reports indicate 88 percent of the wheat with no damage, 9 percent with light damage, and 3 percent with moderate damage. Warmer weather and rain showers combined to help the wheat crop begin its spring "green up" in the middle Mississippi Valley. Warm weather in the northern Great Plains allowed the crop to progress ahead of last year's pace. Oats: One percent of the oat crop was planted, compared with 3 percent planted at this time last year, and behind the 4 percent 5-year average. Dry weather favored seedbed preparation across the northern Corn Belt and adjacent parts of the Great Plains, but cool weather after mid-week delayed planting progress in most areas. Sorghum: Ten percent of the sorghum acreage was planted, compared with 12 percent at this time last year, and 1 percentage point behind the average for this date. Early planted fields continued to emerge and benefitted from good moisture levels.

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending April 6, 2003

| Crop | Current Week | Last Year | 5-Year Average |
|----------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| | Percent | | |
| Spring plowing | 8 | 28 | 22 |
| Oats, planted | 10 | 16 | 14 |

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending April 6, 2003

| Crop | Very Poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
|----------------------|-----------|------|------|------|-----------|
| | Percent | | | | |
| Winter wheat | 0 | 8 | 30 | 48 | 14 |
| Alfalfa stand | 1 | 3 | 40 | 42 | 14 |
| Timothy clover stand | 4 | 5 | 34 | 52 | 5 |
| Pasture conditions | 13 | 7 | 28 | 47 | 5 |

Weather Data For Week Ending April 6, 2003

| STATION | LAST WEEK TEMPERATURE | | | | WEATHER SUMMARY PRECIPITATION | | April 1, 03 - April 6, 03 PRECIPITATION | | | GDD BASE 50F | | GDD BASE 40F TOT |
|------------------|-----------------------|----|-----|-----|-------------------------------|------|---|-------|------|--------------|-----|------------------|
| | HI | LO | AVG | DFN | TOTAL | DAYS | TOTAL | DFN | DAYS | TOTAL | DFN | |
| NORTHWEST | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Erie | 60 | 22 | 37 | -6 | 0.95 | 3 | 0.95 | +0.33 | 3 | 0 | +0 | 15 |
| Franklin_AG | 73 | 23 | 43 | +3 | 1.40 | 4 | 1.40 | +0.74 | 4 | 13 | +13 | 48 |
| Meadville | 72 | 20 | 41 | +0 | 1.66 | 3 | 1.66 | +1.00 | 3 | 7 | +7 | 34 |
| Mercer | 76 | 13 | 43 | +2 | 0.96 | 2 | 0.96 | +0.24 | 2 | 19 | +19 | 54 |
| Springboro | 73 | 21 | 39 | -4 | 1.77 | 5 | 1.77 | +1.19 | 5 | 4 | +4 | 21 |
| Warren | 68 | 18 | 39 | -2 | 1.62 | 6 | 1.57 | +0.91 | 5 | 4 | +4 | 23 |
| NORTH CENTRAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bradford_Regi on | 69 | 12 | 39 | +1 | 2.12 | 4 | 2.12 | +1.46 | 4 | 6 | +6 | 34 |
| Emporium | 76 | 18 | 43 | +4 | 1.73 | 5 | 1.68 | +1.02 | 4 | 15 | +15 | 48 |
| Kane | 70 | 11 | 36 | -2 | 1.74 | 4 | 1.74 | +1.02 | 4 | 1 | +1 | 21 |
| Laporte | 69 | 14 | 35 | -8 | 1.35 | 5 | 1.04 | +0.44 | 4 | 3 | +3 | 23 |
| Lock_Haven | 78 | 21 | 43 | -1 | 1.31 | 4 | 0.99 | +0.39 | 3 | 16 | +16 | 49 |
| Port_Allegany | 73 | 16 | 39 | -1 | 1.64 | 5 | 1.62 | +1.02 | 4 | 7 | +7 | 27 |
| Renovo | 78 | 20 | 43 | -1 | 1.37 | 5 | 1.16 | +0.56 | 4 | 16 | +16 | 50 |
| Ridgway | 73 | 15 | 42 | +3 | 0.36 | 4 | 0.32 | -0.34 | 3 | 13 | +13 | 47 |
| Stevenson_Dam | 76 | 19 | 42 | +4 | 1.67 | 5 | 1.51 | +0.85 | 4 | 12 | +12 | 46 |
| Towanda | 64 | 16 | 35 | -7 | 1.26 | 6 | 0.99 | +0.45 | 5 | 0 | +0 | 13 |
| Well sboro | 72 | 14 | 35 | -4 | 1.61 | 5 | 1.22 | +0.80 | 4 | 5 | +5 | 17 |
| Williamsport_AP | 78 | 22 | 43 | -3 | 0.89 | 4 | 0.62 | +0.02 | 3 | 16 | +11 | 44 |
| NORTHEAST | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hawley | 64 | 16 | 34 | -8 | 0.77 | 4 | 0.57 | -0.06 | 3 | 0 | +0 | 11 |
| Wilkes-Barre/Sc | 73 | 20 | 39 | -5 | 0.65 | 4 | 0.48 | -0.06 | 3 | 9 | +9 | 29 |
| Susquehanna | 58 | 15 | 34 | -5 | 1.26 | 5 | 0.97 | +0.28 | 4 | 0 | +0 | 9 |
| WEST CENTRAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Butler | 75 | 20 | 48 | +5 | 0.84 | 4 | 0.76 | +0.11 | 3 | 34 | +34 | 77 |
| New_Castle | 78 | 19 | 46 | +5 | 0.65 | 3 | 0.65 | +0.05 | 3 | 22 | +22 | 66 |
| Slippery_Rock | 75 | 20 | 46 | +6 | 1.14 | 2 | 1.14 | +0.48 | 2 | 27 | +27 | 69 |
| CENTRAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Altoona/Blair_C | 75 | 22 | 49 | +5 | 0.86 | 4 | 0.77 | +0.11 | 3 | 43 | +38 | 89 |
| DuBois | 73 | 17 | 45 | +5 | 1.67 | 3 | 1.67 | +1.01 | 3 | 31 | +31 | 71 |
| Lewistown | 80 | 27 | 46 | +1 | 0.94 | 4 | 0.53 | -0.01 | 3 | 26 | +20 | 62 |
| Middletown | 78 | 25 | 45 | -3 | 0.66 | 3 | 0.28 | -0.32 | 2 | 18 | +11 | 50 |
| Prince_Gallitz | 74 | 15 | 45 | +3 | 1.52 | 4 | 1.36 | +0.52 | 3 | 31 | +31 | 68 |
| Selinsgrove | 79 | 24 | 43 | -2 | 0.77 | 4 | 0.44 | -0.16 | 3 | 18 | +14 | 41 |
| State_College_P | 76 | 23 | 44 | +2 | 1.20 | 5 | 0.88 | +0.28 | 4 | 20 | +20 | 55 |
| EAST CENTRAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Allentown-Bethl | 74 | 21 | 42 | -5 | 0.48 | 3 | 0.29 | -0.37 | 2 | 8 | +3 | 29 |
| Lehigh ton | 70 | 22 | 39 | -6 | 0.51 | 4 | 0.27 | -0.33 | 3 | 6 | +4 | 26 |
| Matamoras | 58 | 18 | 34 | -10 | 0.53 | 5 | 0.43 | -0.30 | 4 | 0 | +0 | 6 |
| Tobyhanna | 73 | 21 | 37 | -2 | 1.26 | 4 | 1.03 | +0.27 | 3 | 2 | +2 | 19 |
| SOUTHWEST | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pittsburgh/Alle | 76 | 21 | 52 | +8 | 0.97 | 4 | 0.92 | +0.32 | 3 | 58 | +52 | 104 |
| Derry | 78 | 20 | 48 | +5 | 1.42 | 5 | 1.04 | +0.41 | 4 | 44 | +44 | 82 |
| Meyersdale | 73 | 17 | 46 | +3 | 0.94 | 4 | 0.83 | +0.05 | 3 | 25 | +25 | 69 |
| Mount_Pleasant | 77 | 19 | 49 | +8 | 0.92 | 4 | 0.82 | +0.04 | 3 | 38 | +38 | 85 |
| Pittsburgh_Intl | 78 | 20 | 52 | +7 | 0.92 | 2 | 0.92 | +0.26 | 2 | 57 | +51 | 103 |
| Rector | 78 | 20 | 49 | +8 | 0.96 | 3 | 0.80 | +0.02 | 2 | 35 | +35 | 83 |
| Waynesburg | 78 | 20 | 49 | +6 | 0.44 | 2 | 0.44 | -0.26 | 2 | 40 | +37 | 84 |
| SOUTH CENTRAL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Biglerville | 80 | 25 | 47 | -1 | 0.77 | 3 | 0.40 | -0.26 | 2 | 25 | +18 | 65 |
| Everett | 79 | 22 | 48 | +5 | 1.27 | 5 | 1.11 | +0.48 | 4 | 36 | +35 | 80 |
| Hanover | 79 | 26 | 47 | -1 | 0.77 | 2 | 0.28 | -0.38 | 1 | 23 | +16 | 64 |
| Shippensburg | 81 | 26 | 47 | -1 | 0.90 | 3 | 0.42 | -0.18 | 2 | 25 | +17 | 67 |
| South_Mountain | 76 | 19 | 44 | -1 | 1.05 | 4 | 0.31 | -0.35 | 3 | 20 | +17 | 55 |
| York_AP | 80 | 24 | 46 | -3 | 0.47 | 3 | 0.10 | -0.61 | 2 | 22 | +15 | 57 |
| SOUTHEAST | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Green_Lane | 75 | 25 | 43 | -3 | 0.45 | 4 | 0.27 | -0.41 | 3 | 9 | +6 | 35 |
| Hamburg | 78 | 23 | 42 | -2 | 0.32 | 2 | 0.32 | -0.39 | 2 | 13 | +13 | 35 |
| Hopewell | 75 | 22 | 42 | -7 | 0.49 | 4 | 0.18 | -0.54 | 3 | 11 | +3 | 31 |
| Lancaster_AP | 78 | 24 | 44 | -3 | 0.34 | 3 | 0.08 | -0.58 | 2 | 16 | +10 | 45 |
| Neshaminy_Falls | 75 | 27 | 44 | -3 | 0.36 | 5 | 0.18 | -0.60 | 4 | 11 | +5 | 35 |
| New_Holland | 76 | 25 | 43 | -4 | 0.52 | 3 | 0.24 | -0.42 | 2 | 12 | +6 | 38 |
| Philadelphia | 76 | 30 | 46 | -3 | 0.22 | 3 | 0.13 | -0.59 | 2 | 14 | +5 | 50 |
| Philadelphia_NE | 74 | 27 | 44 | -5 | 0.30 | 4 | 0.14 | -0.58 | 3 | 9 | +0 | 37 |
| Reading_AP | 77 | 28 | 44 | -2 | 0.53 | 5 | 0.24 | -0.48 | 4 | 12 | +10 | 38 |
| Valley_Forge_Na | 73 | 23 | 43 | -6 | 0.53 | 4 | 0.18 | -0.54 | 3 | 12 | +4 | 34 |
| Willow_Grove | 73 | 28 | 46 | -1 | 0.23 | 4 | 0.19 | -0.59 | 3 | 14 | +8 | 50 |

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) and Pan Evap in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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INTERNET REPORTERS' COMMENTS, BY COUNTY:

*Reporters are from Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service,
Farm Service Agency, farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.*

"Not much going on in the county due to weather. Fields are still too wet to work. Barnyard areas are extremely muddy, which is always a concern for farmers, not only environmentally but for the health of their herd. The upcoming week still is not predicting dry weather. Looks like farmers will be again in the shop fine tuning equipment."

- Ron McCorkle, Crawford County

"Very little field activity observed here in Erie County. Mostly just fixing fences and spreading manure. A few acres have been plowed on gravel soils. Several landowners commented on the poor season for collecting maple sap and producing syrup."

- Lew Steckler, Erie County

"Pastures beginning to grow, still slow. Cold, wet conditions continue to limit field activities to drier sites."

- Harry Blanchet, Forest County

"Some plowing started in the area. Surprise snow storm Tuesday morning. Very slippery roads for a while. Heavy rain storm Friday night. Won't be any field work for a while. Building fence, hauling manure, getting ready for breeding season."

- Martin Whitmore, Clarion County

"A few fields are being spread with manure. Once again, we have some nice days and just as things are drying out, we get rain and snow. Thunderstorms hit the area late Friday and into Saturday cooling the temperatures down considerably."

- Dolly Little, Cambria County

"It is starting to green up, but still too wet to do anything. Had eight inches of snow last Sunday and two more inches of snow Tuesday!!!"

- Marina Kemper, Huntington County

"Excessive soil moisture has delayed manure application, oat planting, alfalfa establishment, spring plowing and herbicide application to existing alfalfa fields to kill winter annuals."

- David L. Swartz, Perry County

"Spring has come slowly and we are wet. Our first task is to start spreading manure as soon as the ground is fit. Wheat looks like it has come through the long cold winter in good shape."

- James Brubaker, Union County

"Field activities for the past week included planting sweet corn under plastic, nitrogen applications on winter wheat and lime applications."

- Bob Leiby, Lehigh County

"Several good days for field work after a snowy start and cold rainy end to the week. Some additional oats and alfalfa planted during the warm, dry period on Thursday and Friday. Pastures are growing and providing some good early season feed for livestock producers with limited hay supplies after last season's dry conditions."

- John Lohr, Westmoreland County

"Typical spring week. Snow at the beginning and then 70's later. Not much spring work being done. Few plots of new alfalfa seeded. Manure hauling and topdressing small grains is all that is being done. Fruit is approaching pink stage for cherries and peaches, but has been delayed due to cool weather late in week."

- Thomas Kerr, Franklin County

Reporters' comments continued on back page.

“We had one day that might have been borderline fit to do any field work. Starting to get frustrating. Grasses are just now starting to green up.”
- Russ McLucas, Fulton County

“The weather this past week did not provide much of an opportunity for field work and this week doesn't look much better.”
- Dave Stetler, Juniata County

“Waiting for the snow to stop! Looks like it will be a late spring or long summer! Sure hope it dries out, but not as much as last year.”
- David Watters, Bucks County

“Land is wet and field preparation is behind normal.”
- John Leckie, Lancaster County

“Wet weather continues. Very little field work this week other than some manure hauling. Small grains, hay fields and pastures are responding well to the warmer weather and moisture. Spring grass seedings and oats have yet to be planted. The signs of spring are all around us, a welcome sight to see the daffodils and forsythias blooming.”
- Andrew Frankenfield,
Montgomery County

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